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## THE BLACK DOLL.

Dot was a little girl, five years old, the only child left to her parents, whose other children all lay sleeping a still sounder sleep under four tiny mounds of green turf. The parents were poor, and lived in one poor room 'over the water,' that is, on the Surrey side of the Thames. The mother did what she could with her needle and her scissors and her iron to increase the means of subsistence earned by her husband, who plied some mysterious vocation on the river-side, and when he was not engaged in that vocation, performed 'odd jobs' in all parts of London. And some of them were very odd jobs. He was one of those men who are so very useful when you have something to get rid of, and are at your wits' end to know what to do; when, for instance, your little dog has died, and you don't know what to do with the body; or when there is a contagious disease abroad, and it seems advisable to have certain things disinfected or destroyed. On all such occasions Potten was your man. He would do anything for next to nothing, or at anyrate for a mere trifle; anything, at least, that was not dishonest, for a more honest man than Potten did not exist. Nor had the repulsive nature of the work on which he was frequently employed resulted in any corresponding repulsiveness in the man himself. He had a sallow, gaunt face, it is true, for the lines had not fallen unto him in pleasant places; but he smiled, when he did smile, very brightly, and his manner, especially towards children, was gentle, and even winning. No doubt his heart was under the softening influence of a double memory—of Dot and of the tiny graves. But Potten had certainly one unpleasant peculiarity: there were times when he looked the very incarnation of scepticism; disbelief stood confessed in the twinkle of his eye, in the wrinkles round his nose, in the lines about his mouth, in the sound of his snigger. Sternly admonish him, tearfully beg of him, solemnly adjure him to be very careful, and to take the greatest precautions on his own account, and his wife's, and his children's, if he had any; and he would answer impatiently: 'All

right, sir; to be sure I will, ma'am; don't you go for to be afraid;' but all the while his manner and his laugh were as much as to say: 'Tut, tut! It's all a pack of rubbish; no harm shall happen unto me.' Thus does familiarity breed contempt. Who is it that lights his pipe over the powder-magazine? Who is it that burns a naked candle in the deadly atmosphere of the mine? And yet Potten was most scrupulously careful in all that concerned his employers; he may have laughed at them in his sleeve, but, whether it were from a conscientious sense of duty, or from fear of consequences in case of detected neglect, he performed their orders, as regarded *themselves*, to the very letter.

Such was the man who sat contentedly smoking his pipe in the room where Dot lay sleeping, and hugging in her arms a large black doll, with merry black eyes, laughing mouth, and grinning teeth, but without arms—not a doll that most girls would fancy; but Dot loved it and fondled it, as if it had been a paragon of beauty. In Mr Potten's section of society, no special smoking-room is provided, and infants sleep peacefully amidst the fumes of tobacco. Perhaps that may be a reason why fever, though rampant enough, is not more rampant in certain districts.

Well, Mr Potten sat smoking, Mrs Potten sat sewing, and Dot lay sleeping. Mr and Mrs Potten had a deal-table between them; and on the table stood a common sort of lamp, which gave a very good light by means, if smell can be depended upon, of paraffine oil. Dot lay sleeping; but anybody who supposes that she occupied her own little cot with its snow-white coverlet, and other accessories which make such pretty pictures of slumbering childhood, would be very much mistaken. Mr Potten's humble establishment did not admit of so much luxury and independence. Mr and Mrs Potten and Dot all shared the same bed, which, though by no means large, took up a considerable portion of the apartment. The bed had a coverlet of patchwork, old and faded. And yet it was anything but an ugly spectacle that presented itself to the husband and wife whenever they looked in Dot's direction. The

bed-linen was clean, though coarse; and there, with her head between two pillows, lay Dot. Her fair hair, very long for her age, streamed out in all directions; the long lashes of her closed eyes drooped on her cheeks; her smiling mouth, half open, shewed a few white teeth; her chubby little arms were folded round the neck and body, and her little chin rested, as has been said, upon the woolly head, of the black doll. And the black doll, with a ring through its nose, a necklace of beads round its throat, and a flaring yellow frock upon its body, was gorgeous to behold.

Mr Potten arose from his seat, and went softly up to the bed; and there was a moisture in his eyes when he returned. He resumed his seat, and said chuckling: 'Lord love her! How happy she do look!'

'She never had a doll afore, you know, Potten,' rejoined his wife, a care-worn but cheerful, nice-looking woman, 'bar them little halfpenny ones.'

'But she's bin a-cryin',' remarked Potten, with a look of inquiry. 'I see two little stains on her little nose.'

'Yes,' assented Mrs Potten with a light laugh. 'We had a few words about the doll; she'd had it playin' with all the blessed day, and I thought she'd do better without it abed. But she would have dear Blackie, as she calls it; and wouldn't even have it undressed. So I let her have her own way, and that stopped her cryin', and made her happy again.'

'What's the harm?' growled Potten. 'Bless her little heart.'

'It must have cost a lot o' money, that doll,' said Mrs Potten, 'what with the size on it, and the dress, and the ornaments, and what not.'

'Ah! I daresay,' observed Potten with indifference.

'You'd never have bin able to buy one like it,' continued Mrs Potten with much emphasis.

'Not I,' assented Potten with a short laugh. 'Ah! it's an ill wind as blows nobody any good.'

'But you never told me where you got it from,' remarked Mrs Potten. 'You only said it was given to you.'

'What's the odds?' said Potten, yawning. 'Here, I'm tired; I'm agoin' to bed. Come, make haste.'

And Mr and Mrs Potten were soon asleep, with Dot and the black doll between them.

Let us change the time and scene. It shall be the same day, but earlier in the evening; and the place shall be a comfortable house on the Middlesex side of the river Thames, and on the borders of Tyburnia. It is early spring, about an hour after sunset, and a little girl, some seven years of age, is being put to bed. She is evidently an invalid. Her pretty little face is thin and pale; her hands are almost transparent; she totters if she attempts to walk alone. A lady and a maid-servant are present in the room, and render the necessary assistance. The little girl has just had a bath, to judge from plain indications; and now she is being arrayed in the most dainty little night-dress, and

gently laid in the most dainty little cot, with the most dainty appliances. Otherwise, the room, and indeed the whole house, presents an unfurnished appearance; all the furniture seems to be huddled together in out-of-the-way places, and there is a notable absence of carpets from the floors. Wherever you turn, you see basins or other utensils filled with a red liquid, as if there had been a general nose-bleeding throughout the house. Moreover, there is a pervading smell as of soot, from which the experienced would infer disinfectants. In the little girl's own room stands a table, on which are arranged, to please the eye and smell and taste, wall-flowers, violets, primroses, daffodils, jonquils, grapes, and blood-oranges. Cheap photographs and cheap picture-books, which may serve to amuse for the moment, and may be afterwards destroyed without compunction on the score of extravagance, are scattered about in all directions. When the little girl has been made quite comfortable, the lady sits down by the side of the cot, and prepares to coax the invalid to sleep.

'Am I well now, dear mum?' asks the invalid.

'Nearly well, dear,' replies mamma. 'We are going to the sea-side to-morrow, and then you will get quite strong and well again.'

'But if I'm not well, why can't I go on having Candace to sleep with me?' asks the invalid.

'Candace has gone away, darling.'

'Where to, mum?'

'I don't know, darling. She was taken away by the man when he took the other things.'

'What will he do to her, mum? Cure her?'

'I hope so, dear.'

'Then why can't I have her back when she's cured, dear mum?'

'Because, though she might not do you any harm, dear, it's safer, on account of other people, that we should get rid of her altogether.'

'Poor Candace! I hope she'll soon get well,' murmured the invalid sleepily. 'And I hope,' she added, 'that she'll not make any other little girl as ill as I have been.'

'I sincerely hope not,' said the lady fervently, but in a very low voice, so as not to disturb the little invalid, who was dozing off.

Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, was the name which the little invalid had given to her favourite plaything, a black doll. It had been included amongst a number of articles which 'the man' had carried off to be destroyed or 'cured,' as the little invalid would have said. The lady knew nothing of 'the man,' but that he had been authoritatively recommended as a regular practitioner in such matters. She had paid him well, and had strongly advised him to destroy everything, or, at anyrate, to bake, smoke, steam, boil, and disinfect everything thoroughly. Unless he faithfully promised to do at least the latter, she would see if she could not find some other means of riddance. And 'the man' had replied: 'All right, ma'am; don't you go for to be afraid; I know all about it.' But somehow his manner was a little contemptuous;

his eye twinkled, and his mouth sniggered in a by no means reassuring fashion. And so he had gone his way; and she did not know even his name, which was Potten.

And so the lady and the little invalid went to the sea-side; and the latter grew strong and plump and rosy again.

And Candace and 'the man' were clean forgotten.

Meanwhile, Dot had been getting on famously with 'dear Blackie.' No doubt, Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, had fallen considerably in the social scale; but it is a question whether she had ever before been treated with so much deference. Dot never did anything without consulting 'dear Blackie.' She obtained that sable personage's permission before she even dared to put into her mouth a single piece of bread and butter or a sip of milk and water. Nay, the maternal authority itself had to be backed up by the influence of the late Queen Candace. On the third evening of Dot's possession of her treasure—'Now, Dot, it's time to go to bed; that's a good gal,' Mrs Potten said.

'S'all we do to bed, dear B'ackie?' Dot asked; and then she cried exultantly: 'No, mother; dear B'ackie says we mustn't do to bed 'et, but wait for da.'

'You'd better ask dear Blackie again,' Mrs Potten replied, for she was a kind, patient, and judicious but firm mother.

There was a short pause; and then Dot said, with a knowing laugh: 'Dear B'ackie says we'd better do to bed to-night, and sit up for da some other night.'

'Ah! dear Blackie's a good sort,' Mrs Potten admitted, as she proceeded to undress her obedient little Dot.

And Dot, ere she closed her eyes in sleep, kissed her black doll, and said: 'Dood-night, dear B'ackie. Dod b'ess 'ou.'

That same evening, Mr Potten, whose avocations nearly always took him away from home all day, and who, consequently, seldom had an opportunity of observing Dot and her ways, was treated by her to a little comedy, which he, as a father, found more laughter-moving than anything ever performed by Liston, Wright, or Toole. Dot was restless, and woke up whilst her father was taking his pipe and drop of beer.

And Dot insisted upon his sharing his pipe and beer with 'dear Blackie,' who, she asserted, had always been accustomed to tobacco in 'B'ackie's land,' and liked beer 'froffed up,' or, as Mr Potten himself expressed it, 'with a head on.' So 'dear Blackie' was placed in a sitting posture upon the table, was propped up against a candlestick, and in a silent language, interpreted by Dot, contributed greatly to the hilarity of the evening.

'Lord love her little heart!' exclaimed Potten, as he wiped tears of amusement from his eyes when Dot had sunk exhausted to sleep; 'she's as good as any play; that 'ere doll's a fortun' to us.'

But the next evening Potten was not so well entertained. Dot, it appeared, had been seized with a shivering fit, and was now sleeping heavily, breathing stertorously, and tossing uneasily, with

a skin as hot and dry as a burning coal. But poor people shrink from the expense of a doctor; and the Pottens resolved to see what a night would bring forth. The night brought forth a sore throat, so sore that it seemed as if Dot would be choked. There was no help for it; a doctor must be called, and Potten, on his way to work, engaged one to 'look in.' The doctor looked in, and looked serious. He sent medicine, and word that he would look in again in the evening. In the evening he came; and Potten was there.

Dot was one bright red flush, to the very whites of her eyes.

'What is it, sir, please?' asked Potten, with white and trembling lips.

'Well,' said the doctor, 'it is best to tell you, in order that you may take precautions. It is a very bad case of scarlet fever.'

Potten groaned heavily, dropped down by the bedside, and hid his face in the clothes.

'Come, be a man,' said the doctor, touching him on the shoulder; 'don't give way like that. I've known worse cases recover.'

Potten got up, and stared about him like one distraught.

The doctor gave his directions to Mrs Potten; and with a kind 'good-night,' departed.

The eighth day was approaching, and Dot was in a high state of delirium. There were no sweet flowers, no violets, no primroses, no daffodils for poor little Dot, to catch her eye, and soothe her senses; no grapes and no blood-oranges to moisten her poor parched lips. And, whenever her father drew near her pillow, she, when the delirious fit was upon her, would turn away her face and mutter: 'Do away, b'ack man; do away, b'ack man!'

The eighth day came and passed; and Dot passed away in the twilight.

Potten had scarcely spoken a word as long as the fever lasted; but now, as he stood looking with a ghastly face, and dry, fierce eyes, at the tiny corpse before him, he said, in slow, distinct, deliberate tones: 'Susan, I've killed my child.'

Mrs Potten, for a moment, hushed her sobs, and stared at him in blank amazement.

'Look here,' continued Potten, in low, husky tones: 'I knowed there'd bin fever in the house where this come from; the lady that gave it me begged and prayed o' me to burn it, or, leastways, to burn the clo'es and the hair, and bake and scour and reg'lar disinfect the rest on it; but I was afraid o' sp'ilin' it, and—and—as they was always disinfectin' everything in that house, I never give it a second thought, and—and—I—give it—her;' and, with a sob that shook his whole body, he threw down upon the patchwork counterpane the black doll.

Mrs Potten had listened to him with a face that grew paler and graver and more horror-stricken at every word he uttered; but all she said was, in a voice full of awe and agony: 'O John!'

It was the only reproach she made him; but it may be that there is more in a tone than in words.

Potten walked slowly to the door, and left the room. He looked like a man in a dream. He did not return that night; and Mrs Potten was alarmed. He did not return the next day or night; and the neighbours were alarmed. They thought, too truly, that the poor man had gone distracted, was mad with grief and his sense of having been the cause of

the death of his child. In this belief, they naturally expected to find him on the river-side. And there, on the third day, they found him—at low-water—Drowned.

### WORKING-MEN'S SAVINGS.

ATTENTION has been strongly directed, during the last few years, to the fact that English workmen do not save a reasonable proportion of their earnings. Whether wages are high or low, the receipts are nearly all spent as soon as earned. Benefit or friendly societies are excellent for provident purposes, if judiciously established and honestly managed; but Mr Tidd Pratt and others officially conversant with the subject, declare that there is here too often a lamentable waste of workmen's money, through miscalculation and defective stewardship. Savings-banks, alike those under the old trustee system and those under the Post-office, are much neglected by working-men; most of the deposits are known to belong to other classes of the community. Post-office life assurances and deferred annuities are almost ignored by them. Land and building societies are more in favour, and so (especially in the northern counties of England) are co-operative partnerships. Unfortunately, trades-unions are more in favour than any of the above. On this thorny subject, we only wish to remark, that whatever effect the unions may have in raising wages, they do not conduce to habits of thrift and economy, the laying by of a provision for the 'rainy day' of sickness, slackness of trade, or failing strength in old age.

It is only those experienced men who are in a position to compare one European country with another who are fully aware of the fact, that English workmen do not rank high in the possession of provident habits. Our artisans and labourers do not save to any considerable extent, as compared with workmen abroad. We may on this subject advantageously refer to an address by the Earl of Derby, delivered a few months ago; an address all the more valuable owing to the unquestioned good-will of that nobleman towards the industrious classes generally. An association called the 'Provident Knowledge Society' has been formed, for encouraging habits of thrift among the artisan and labouring class—by establishing penny banks for children, and by drawing the attention of adults to three kinds of facilities now afforded by our postal system—namely, post-office savings-banks, post-office life assurances, and post-office deferred annuities. At one of the anniversary meetings of this Society, the earl expressed a belief that a large portion of the litigation in the county courts would cease to arise if men accustomed themselves more to ready-money dealings, and less to credit; and that they would have more ready money at command if more prudent and economical in their habits. Adulteration of commodities, and fraud in weights and measures, he likewise believes might be lessened by a similar agency. 'What is the explanation of frauds of this kind being possible, and even habitual? As often as not, the cause is, that the customer is in debt; he must take the article which is offered to him at the price at which it is offered. If he refuses, not only will he get nothing else instead, but he fears that he will be "county-courted" for a debt which he cannot pay.'

Persons who have practically benefited by the system, believe that co-operation rests on a higher and more permanent principle than the mere existence of adulteration and unthriftiness; 'but it may be well to see what the Earl of Derby says on this point: 'Herein is the whole secret, as I take it, of the success of those institutions which are called co-operative stores. There is no magic in the name or in the thing. They can sell cheaply because they make no bad debts; and they make no bad debts, because those who come to them have no option except to pay ready money.'

It is a sad and solemn truth, that a very large part of the suffering which surrounds us is caused by a deficiency in habits of economy and forethought. When large masses of people have for a series of years been accustomed to live from hand to mouth, it becomes a matter almost of impossibility to instil new habits into them; to get out of the old groove is more and more difficult the deeper the groove becomes. The exercise of prudent economy (a different thing from paltry niggardliness), so as to be beforehand with the world, must be the result of early lessons; and we see too little of it around us, because these early lessons are too scantily imparted. 'You may educate a man as highly as you please; you may give him the franchise, and call upon him to exercise it as often as you think fit; you may provide the best newspapers in the world to tell him what is going on, and museums and galleries without end to cultivate his taste: but no amount of political freedom, or of literary culture and refinement, will carry with them the sense of independence and of self-respect so long as he knows that he is in somebody else's power; that he has on his shoulders a burden of debt from which he cannot shake himself loose. That is a slavery almost as degrading, and, I am afraid, almost as common, as the kindred slavery of drunkenness.'

Concerning one's own country, it would be pleasant to think that in the good sense shewn in thrift, we can compare well with our neighbours. But is it so? The earl answers this question in the negative: 'I do not think it is flattering to the patriotism of an Englishman to see that in France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, where wages are lower than here, and subsistence in general not easier, there is a vast reserve of national wealth in the hands of the working-classes; while among ours, better paid, better fed, better clothed, there is far too large a portion in a condition nearly resembling that which Defoe described as existing at the end of the seventeenth century.' It is certainly worthy of note, although the fact is generally lost sight of by our writers, that observant men commented on the same English peculiarity two centuries ago, as is noticeable now. Defoe's words were: 'It [thrift] may have been brought in, and in some places where it has been planted, it has thriven well enough; but it is a foreign species; it neither loves nor is beloved by Englishmen. This observation I have made between foreigners and Englishmen; that where an Englishman earns twenty shillings a week, and but just lives (as we call it), a Dutchman grows rich, and leaves his children in very good condition.'

Thrift, economy, saving, providence, frugality—call it which we may—can, of course, be fostered in a variety of ways; and good will be done if any suggested plan should be viewed favourably



by the class mostly to be benefited by it. With this purpose, we will draw attention to a remarkable scheme set forth, or at least outlined, by Sir Joseph Whitworth, a large employer of labour at Manchester, and known all over Europe as one of the leading mechanical engineers or machine-makers of the day. Some months ago, in the year 1873, he submitted a sketch of his plan to the Society of Arts. He had already signalled himself by founding the noblest endowment ever known for the encouragement of industrial or technical training. He has invested the sum of L.100,000 in the names of official trustees; and the interest accruing from this sum, about L.3000 per annum, is to be appropriated to thirty scholarships of L.100 per annum each, called 'Whitworth Scholarships,' so awarded as to encourage young men to study the science as well as the manipulations of industrial operations, especially such as relate to mechanical engineering. Such a donor is not likely to have other than kindly motives for recommending judicious economy to working-men.

Sir Joseph Whitworth's suggestions are addressed rather to employers than to the employed, seeing that they cannot be carried into effect except by the initiation and support of the former. His plan is, that every railway company, trading company, or joint-stock limited liability company, should establish and maintain its own savings-bank, for the benefit of the workmen and servants in its employ, with a good—even a large—rate of interest. This high rate, together with perfect security, he believes would be more likely to foster a habit of saving than any other course that could be devised. So far would he carry this plan, that he proposes that the rate of interest to be paid by the company to its workmen-depositors should be equal to the rate of dividend paid to the shareholders, but with a minimum of four per cent. If this should appear to render the workmen or servants actually better off than their employers, the shareholders, this, he believes, would be well purchased by the bond of union established between all the parties concerned; capital and labour would benefit themselves by benefiting each other. As to security, an act of parliament might make the deposits a first charge on the estates of the companies. The dividend of a joint-stock company is made publicly known; not so the profits of a private firm; and this would create some difficulty in applying the system to the latter. Nevertheless (it is urged by Sir Joseph), a private firm could work in the same useful path, by guaranteeing that the interest on deposits should never be less than four per cent. (higher than is paid by any of the regular savings-banks), while some plan might be devised of regulating the actual rate according to the profits of the firm. Of course, unless the system were willingly adopted, no attempt would be made to overcome the difficulties that might arise.

The mode suggested for applying the plan to the agricultural districts is certainly remarkable. Here it is not left to individual farmers; and as to firms and companies, there are very few. Each county is to have its savings-banks, for the small savings of the men and women engaged in agricultural labour. Interest at the rate of six or seven per cent. is to be paid to the depositors; and as this would entail a loss to the county exchequer, something like an insurance or industrial rate

would be imposed to make up this deficiency, to be collected with, and by the same agency as the poor-rate. This will appear to most persons a serious matter. Local rates are already high enough to produce much complaining, and there is but little disposition to welcome an addition to their number. The promulgator of the scheme, however, argues that as this interest rate increases, the poor-rate would decrease. If the habit of saving became general among the working-classes, there would be a lessening of cost to the property owning classes, who have now to contribute in a great variety of ways towards the support of the unfortunates who have made no provision for themselves. For it must be borne in mind that property mainly supports charities, hospitals, dispensaries, infirmaries, union workhouses, asylums, reformatories, prisons, police establishments, &c., which contain among their inmates large numbers of persons who would not be there if habits of economy prevailed among the labouring classes. The unfortunate result of indiscriminate almsgiving, and even of much of our legislation, is to give most to those who have done little or nothing towards their own independent support. Sir Joseph Whitworth states the matter thus: 'In the case of men or women falling into distress from causes beyond their own control, what better proof could be given that they are deserving of sympathy and assistance than the fact, that they had put by savings at a time when they were able to do so? The rule of action should be to do as little as possible for those who do as little as possible for themselves.' A great change must take place in public sentiment before this rule of action will be extensively adopted!

Sir Joseph Whitworth has offered two prizes for the best and second best essays on this subject—the most practical and effectual mode of encouraging habits of thrift or economy among the artisan and labouring classes. He invites the essayists to grapple with the question, whether uniform hours of work, for workers of different ages, are favourable to those concerned. The popular view is in this direction, but he doubts its soundness. 'I think it will be admitted as desirable that one-third of the period of man's existence should, if possible, be spent free from the necessity for labour and toil. The middle period of life is, therefore, the time when man's energies should be put forth, and the greatest amount of work done that strict obedience to the laws of health will permit. The experience of industrious men goes to prove that the most pleasurable existence is insured by following this course.' He deprecates the forcible limitation of the hours of labour to any standard that shall alike govern young men, middle-aged men, and elderly men. This course prevents the strong and healthy from saving so much as they easily could save, towards a provision for that period of life when man's energies begin to fail, when rest is necessary, and work irksome. The result is stated (perhaps rather strongly) thus: 'The man who does not save when he is in health and strength, robs the man who does save; because the law compels him to support those who have not saved, and to bury them when dead.' Sir Joseph might have added, that the recently-introduced system of frequent holidays and half-holidays has been most prejudicial as regards the culture of habits of economy, while it has obviously done

nothing in the way of mental improvement, and, we fear, little to improve health.

The prizes above adverted to are to be awarded by a committee of the Society of Arts. We need not in this place dwell further on the prize method of eliciting suggestions; but it may be well to remark, that the Council of the Society call the attention of intending essayists to the liability to fraud or deception in the adoption of any plan for paying a high rate of interest in the manner proposed; such, for instance, as that of colourable investments being made by persons investing, in their own names, moneys not *bona fide* their own. It will be necessary to point out some effectual mode of preventing such frauds; the limit which should be imposed on the sums invested by each depositor; the length of notice necessary for withdrawal; and the minor details of procedure.

We are writing at a time when several measures are under parliamentary discussion relating to the well-being of working-men. The point to be borne in mind, however, is, that the chief reformer must be the working-man himself; he must himself adopt habits tending to frugality, economy, good management, or the exertions of the legislature will prove futile.

## THE BLOSSOMING OF AN ALOE.

### CHAPTER III.—THE BALL.

THE moon, which had risen early that night, was shining brightly over the sea, and lighting all the country-side. The old house was twinkling all over with lights, and through the open windows sounds of merry music and happy laughter streamed out upon the air. The ball had succeeded to the marriage-feast, and the gay and gallant company were enjoying it as people used to enjoy balls in Scotland twenty golden years ago; as, in my capacity of looker-on, it seems to me they do not enjoy balls anywhere now. All the young folks, and some folks who were no longer young, were dancing; all the old folks were looking on admiringly. And then it was such real dancing; not lounging, or gliding, or any kind of make-believe, but genuine, hearty dancing; graceful in some cases, merely active and lively in others, but real; with nobody wanting 'to sit out,' and nobody going through it with boredom in his soul, and the reflection of boredom in his face. Everybody there had driven distances varying between five miles and fifteen, except those who had driven twenty miles and upwards, after a railway journey from an adjoining county, and they deserved their reward. They had it; the bridal ball at Barrholme was a success, whereof the renown lasted long, and which is quoted now by the survivors of those days as one of those things that belonged to 'the good old times.'

The marriage ceremony had taken place in the afternoon, and the bride and bridegroom had taken their departure some time before we look into the ball-room at Barrholme, where the dancers are performing a seemingly endless set of quadrilles in reel time and step. It is a fine old room, with a gallery for the musicians, and long windows opening to the floor, with seats for the elders comfortably disposed in deep recesses. The lighting and decoration are ample and tasteful, and Lady Mervyn surveys the scene, especially one or

two particulars of it, with satisfaction, which increases when the animated quadrille at length comes to an end, and the couples who have been dancing walk about the room, or stray into the long corridor, where refreshments are to be found, or, in a few cases, retire to the curtained recesses, for the better continuance of their conversation.

'I do believe it will come right,' thought Lady Mervyn, as she observed the performance of a strategic movement of this kind on the part of a couple whom she had been noticing unobserved since the departure of the bride and bridegroom had set her attention free. 'How fortunate if the associations of to-day should have induced him to make up his mind! He is certainly more attentive to her than I have ever seen him. And she really looks wonderfully well.' Then her ladyship applied herself to preventing an interruption of the *tête-à-tête*, of which she so much approved, by the self-denying process of devoting herself to a certain Laird of Gairloch, who was desperately bent on talking to Captain Mervyn about military matters in general, and his own reminiscences of forty years past in particular. As Lady Mervyn moved towards the unsuspecting old gentleman, who was laboriously making his way towards the recess to which Captain Mervyn and Anne Cairnes (for it was to them that her ladyship's speculations pointed) had retired, many of her guests commented upon the dignity of her figure, the richness and good taste of her dress, and the 'remains' of that beauty which had once been remarkable in her fine-featured, but somewhat keen and cold face.

Lady Mervyn was not an ordinary woman—a fact recognised by all those among whom she lived, though none of them understood exactly wherein the extraordinariness of her character and disposition consisted. She was more respected than liked, even in her own family, and the sentiment she commanded outside that boundary was deference rather than popularity. She was reserved, even taciturn, and though kind and charitable to the poor, she had not ready or large sympathies, and people, especially young people, thought her severe. The fact was, Lady Mervyn had more intellect than her neighbours, and less heart; at all events, it admitted fewer objects of affection, and was more concentrated. Pride was her ruling passion, and she had been hit hard through it many times, as everybody is hit hard through his or her ruling passion; but she had a marvellous power of standing up against the blows, and hiding the bruises; so that when she suffered, she suffered unsuspected, and was thereby consoled. In the bloom of her youth, and the fullness of her very considerable beauty, she had married for love a man whose intellectual inferiority to herself she speedily recognised; but she continued to love him not only after that recognition, but when she had made some other discoveries of a yet more disenchanting nature; and no one living had ever heard a complaint of unhappiness or disappointment from Lady Mervyn's lips, or discovered a trace of those feelings in her equable, well-bred manner. Fifteen years after their marriage, Sir Alexander and Lady Mervyn, who had previously lived a good deal in London, took up their permanent abode at Barrholme, and it was understood that the hereditary gout of the Mervyns had made alarming inroads upon Sir Alexander's constitution, so that it was necessary for him to lead a very quiet

life, and to limit his recreations to the occasional friendly hospitalities of a district, of which Barrholme formed a remote and not easily attainable portion. Gout, which was hereditary, was quite real in Sir Alexander's case ; but gambling, which was not hereditary, was as real, and the whole truth was, that the long-descended Scotch baronet had gone very near to ruining himself, as only his wife and his confidential man of business knew ; and the family gout was a Godsend, for it forced him to renounce his destructive way of life, and it rendered him powerless to resist whatever his wife and their trusty counsellor decided upon as best to be done. So, Sir Alexander was taken down to Barrholme, and kept there, and his wife nursed him and the property with equal skill, devotion, and constancy. The double task told on Lady Mervyn : she aged unduly, her good looks were mentioned in the past tense too soon ; and the sphere of her feelings was narrowed. She really loved just two persons in the world—her husband, who speedily became a valetudinarian, and was never, on any account, to be troubled about anything whatever ; a state of things which he accepted with passive acquiescence—the one excitement he had coveted having become impossible, he was content to do without any—and David, her only son, to whose future she had transferred all the hidden ambition of her nature. She had been a good and indulgent mother, in a perfunctory way, to Marion, her only daughter, but she had never cared very deeply for her ; their respective dispositions were unsympathetic ; and Lady Mervyn's concentration of thought and feeling in the interests of her own married life, led her to expect and desire the same on her daughter's part. From her wedding-day, Marion would always be 'one of the Græmes' in her mother's mind, detached from the Mervyns, as she herself had been from the Maitlands. David Mervyn had been given every advantage of education within his parents' power to bestow upon him, and the purchase of his commission, and subsequent 'steps,' had taxed his mother's capacity for management to the uttermost. Only one thing in the world would Lady Mervyn not have bestowed upon her beloved son—her confidence. That she withheld ; and he was not to blame that, in ignorance of the true state of the family fortunes, he spent all the money he could get freely, and without a thought of its cost to his mother. That among the great landed proprietors, and the big fortunes of the stewartry, his father could not be counted as a rich man, David Mervyn was necessarily aware, but he had an implicit belief in the rent-roll of Barrholme ; it never occurred to him that it was not fully and substantially represented by the rental, or that he absorbed, in his single person, an unfair proportion of the family revenue. He was not unprincipled, and so he did not get into debt ; but if he had done so, it would not have come into his mind that his father would find it inconvenient to let him have a few hundreds. He had sometimes thought it odd that he knew so little about the actual state and general conduct of affairs at Barrholme ; it was unlike other fellows' relations to their fathers and mothers ; but he easily dismissed the theme from his mind by referring the fact to his early absences from home, his present life, which made him merely an occasional visitor there, and his mother's reserved

ways about everything. He supposed, when women got the management of affairs into their own hands, they were generally jealous and secretive ; he should only weary her, most likely, by asking questions, and nothing could be more certain than that she managed everything admirably. David Mervyn was in Ireland with his regiment, when the arrangements for his sister's marriage were made, and he had only a general idea of their nature, an idea which did not impress him with a notion that his sister had been generously treated, and he was inclined to depart from the invariable family custom of unquestioning acquiescence in all that was done by Lady Mervyn, by remonstrating strongly on the point. Happily, he intimated his half-formed intention to Marion, and she implored him to refrain. It did not signify to her or to Gordon, she said ; they only wanted each other ; they could wait for any money that might be eventually coming to her. So David, who was very full of certain matters of great interest to himself at the time, said nothing, and thought little more on the subject.

Her daughter's marriage had, however, brought about a kind of crisis in Lady Mervyn's life. The general review in which things had to be passed, was not altogether satisfactory ; she had done a great deal towards clearing off the burdens which Sir Alexander had laid upon the estate, but it was still burdened, and expenses were not lessening. There would be more money wanted for David presently, and where was it to come from ? Then Lady Mervyn bethought her of the simplest and easiest way in which a pleasant young man of good birth may 'better himself,' and decided in her own mind that David must marry an heiress. Perhaps, in order to carry this point, to induce him to recognise the necessity of the step, she should find herself obliged to abandon a portion of her reserve, to let him know that his father's circumstances were less flourishing than they appeared to the world to be. It might be that she should have to endure this wound to her pride also, she who had already borne so many ! but if it must be so, it must. All her efforts had not sufficed completely to restore the fallen fortunes of Barrholme ; the inheritor of them must now take his turn at their renovation.

Very shortly after the propriety of her son's making a rich marriage had presented itself to her mind, it assumed all the consistency of a fixed idea, aided by Lady Mervyn's habitual experience of the submission of persons and circumstances to her will. Things had gone very well in respect to Marion ; why should they not go equally well in the case of David ? She, whose own life had been completely moulded, tempered, and governed by her first and only love, was complacently ready to ignore the existence of such a sentiment in that of her son—of course, he might love the heiress as well as marry her, if he could ; that would be entirely his own affair ; but Lady Mervyn had never seen any sentimental tendencies in David ; he never took more notice of one girl than another, that she could remember, and, besides, he really had excellent common-sense ; she would not do him the injustice of supposing that it could fail him in a matter of such paramount importance.

This point fixed in Lady Mervyn's mind, the next which offered itself for consideration was,



whether the heiress who was close at hand would not be a fit and proper person to achieve the restoration and aggrandisement of the fortunes of Barrholme? There was the difficulty of Anne Cairnes's undistinguished birth, and there was the drawback of the plebeian origin of her fortune, and both were great; but Lady Mervyn knew that her son was not likely to find an heiress in precisely his own rank, and Anne Cairnes and her father were now regarded in the county with much more consideration than they had been when Victoria Lodge had first reared its obnoxious front upon the ancient Tors. Lady Mervyn was ready to remember, too, that a woman merges her insignificance in her husband's importance, and to lay every other kind of unction to her pride which could avail to soothe it. For Anne herself, she had a tepid liking, the strongest feeling which could be evoked in Lady Mervyn's breast by any one outside her family circle; and she never doubted but that Anne would acquiesce joyfully in an arrangement which could hardly fail to have her father's grateful sanction also. After all, what can a rich nobody's wealth do for him and his half so well worth the purchase as when it raises him to an alliance with 'gentle blood?' Thus did Lady Mervyn caress and nurture her expedient, after the fashion of persons whose lives are narrow and concentrated, and who are habituated to exercising an imperious rule within a small sphere, until it seemed to her that the failure of it would be a misfortune of almost impossible proportions.

Lady Mervyn was aware that it had occurred to more than one of the county magnates that Miss Cairnes would be a very agreeable addition to their family circle in the capacity of daughter-in-law, and she also knew that Anne had not reached her twentieth year without having been sought by disinterested suitors, for her own sake; but she was not troubled by these reflections; she had never seen anything to lead her to believe that Anne was less fancy-free than David, and as he was infinitely superior to any and all the young men whom she was in the habit of seeing, she would naturally prefer him when he should seek her preference. Lady Mervyn was so full of this project by the time at which David was to arrive for his sister's wedding, that she actually contemplated its disclosure to Sir Alexander, but abandoned the intention on finding him particularly cross and irritable, and declaring himself 'worried to death' by the preparations for the wedding, everything connected with which was sedulously kept out of his sight, and which might have been about to take place in the adjoining parish, for any real trouble or disturbance it occasioned to him.

Six months had elapsed since David Mervyn's last visit to Barrholme, and during that time, owing to Marion's engagement, and the pleasant stir of anticipation and preparation in the house, the intimate association between Victoria Lodge and Barrholme had much increased. When Gordon Græme was not with her, Marion naturally wanted to talk about him, and Anne Cairnes took an untiring interest in the subject, so that the girls were constantly together, and it was reassuring to Lady Mervyn to observe that Anne never had any engagements, occupations, or interests which were not made to give way to those of the inmates of Barrholme. The tie between the two girls was an unequal one, for Anne Cairnes

was in every respect, except birth, and a certain gracefulness which sometimes belongs to birth, the superior of her friend; but, in addition to the attraction which Marion individually possessed for the stronger, deeper, and more tender nature of Anne, she exercised a collateral charm; she was David Mervyn's sister!

The *tête-à-tête* in the recess of the window, which had been so pleasant to Lady Mervyn to observe, was no less agreeable to David. He was genuinely fond of his sister, and very glad to learn from her 'great friend' a number of small particulars which her letters had not contained, and which he knew he should have no chance of hearing from his mother, who had just one fault in David's eyes: she did not care enough for Marion. The brother and sister resembled one another in appearance as little as did the friends. David Mervyn was a soldierly-looking young man, of a well-knit and active figure. He was not handsome, except in so far as a pair of fine dark blue eyes, capable of much variety of expression, can render a man's face—in which no other feature is peculiarly capable of description—handsome, but he was perfectly unaffected, and had a certain high courage and ease in his bearing which made him pleasant to look upon. He was one of those favoured individuals whose presence always clears and brightens the social atmosphere. When David was at home, Sir Alexander was less peevish and more reasonable; Lady Mervyn was more approachable and companionable, Marion was perfectly happy. And Anne? Well, she had asked herself that question, and answered it, long ago—long before this evening, when she is listening and talking to David with a delightful sense that he has never spoken to her quite like this before; that there is something new in his manner and in his looks—something that draws her nearer to him, and makes her heart—which has long been all his—beat with an exquisite sense of hope and joy. He had told her, when they met in the drawing-room, a few minutes before the marriage of Marion Mervyn and Gordon Græme, how very glad he was to see her; how much he counted on her society during his sister's absence; and many other things of the sort, which, though to a certain extent, they were words of course, had strangely affected her, because they were said with a difference from his former well-remembered manner. Several times during the evening, and after the ball had commenced, he had returned to her side, from his attentions *de rigueur* to other ladies present, and there was in his way of doing so the confidence expressed in the poet's line:

These are my visits, but thou art my home.

When he danced with her, there was the same change in him. How well she remembered on former occasions the pain that had mingled with the pleasure of dancing with him; the pang that had come with the conviction that she was no more to him than the other girls in the room, except that she danced better than they did! But it was different now, quite different; he really was thinking about her; he really was happy to be with her; and by his close and curious questions respecting the footing she was on at Barrholme and her relations with his mother, he evinced an interest in her which she had never previously been able to detect.



## CHAPTER IV.—THE SUMMONS.

'How wonderfully well Anne Cairnes looks!' was said by many of Lady Mervyn's guests that night; and truly said, to the great satisfaction of two persons, who very rarely had any feeling in common—Lady Mervyn and Mr Cairnes. Her ladyship even condescended to add to the simple and kindly gentleman's pleasure by assuring him that she had never until then known how pretty his daughter was. Mr Cairnes, whose gift of patient kindness and old memories of long-suffering witnessed and soothed, enabled him to get on very well indeed with the peevish and gouty Sir Alexander, but who was decidedly afraid of Lady Mervyn, assented timidly, and edged away to a corner, whence he could see his daughter as she danced, and be out of her ladyship's way. Anne certainly did look very well—her eyes were shining, her cheeks were glowing, her smile was bright and frequent, and her step was as light as a fairy's tread. She was rather too simply dressed for his taste; but she would have her own way this time. She would not put on her poor mother's diamonds, and so be smarter than the other bridemaids. 'Well, well,' said her father to himself, 'if she is always as bright and as happy as she is to-night, God bless her! she won't want diamonds to set her off; and now I'll just go and cheer Sir Alexander up a little. I daresay he's downhearted enough at parting with his daughter.'

'And you are not going home to-night!—how delightful!' said David Mervyn to Anne, as, after a third dance, he was about to relinquish her to another partner.

'I am not. Lady Mervyn is so kind as to say I can be of great use to her to-morrow morning, as there are so many people staying in the house.'

'We shall not meet at breakfast, I suppose? You will hardly be up to the exertion of appearing?'

'O yes, I shall. Marion and I pride ourselves on early hours after dancing; and I shall be very punctual to-morrow, as Lady Mervyn never leaves Sir Alexander in the morning.'

'When do the people go away?'

'Immediately after a late breakfast, I suppose.'

'Then will you?'—he hesitated for a moment, then resumed—'will you let me have a talk with you, at the old rendezvous, on the platform, where you and I and Marion have held many a council, as early as possible to-morrow, before I see my mother alone? I am in a difficulty, and Marion told me, just before she left us to-day, that, in default of her, I was to go to you. You have the *carte du pays* here, and can advise me. Here comes Charles Stewart to claim his dance. I take your promise for granted.'

Of all the words which David Mervyn had spoken to her that night, Anne Cairnes remembered these best, and thought over them longest, when, the ball over, and the house quiet at last, she found herself in her room, the room that until that day had been Marion's. That the communication which David intended to make to her could concern her individually, she did not for a moment imagine; but the anticipation of his confidence was very sweet to her, and, in her girlish inexperience, she dwelt on the word 'difficulty' with a secret pleasure. It must mean money, she thought, and she did not recoil from the audacity of the assumption. Lady Mervyn had not kept her secret so

absolutely hidden, in every instance, as she fondly believed; an inkling of it, derived from the quickness of his own observation, aided by the former business habits of his life, had come to Mr Cairnes, and, as he discussed everything with his daughter, he had talked to her of his suspicion that Barrholme estate was not in a very prosperous condition, and that Lady Mervyn had no little difficulty in keeping things straight. Mr Cairnes had none of the hesitation of polite society about alluding to such matters; he would not have kept up appearances in his own case to the amount of a yearly pound beyond the sum he could comfortably command and apportion, and he had no sympathy with efforts of the sort. He imputed much of Lady Mervyn's taciturnity and preoccupation to their true cause, and informed Anne of it; and therefore she readily associated David's 'difficulty' with a want of money, and his application for her counsel with his having wished to sound Marion as to the aspect of affairs just then, and Marion's having no time to talk with him. If David wanted money, thought Anne—who knew nothing about the light in which pecuniary obligations were regarded between men, and saw only a delightful simplicity in the solution of the case—of course her father would let him have as much as he wanted; he must not on any account trouble Lady Mervyn just at present. How very fortunate that he had thought of telling her about the 'difficulty,' because she could ask her father to set it right for him at once, and save him all embarrassment. It was not an unreasonable plan to be formed by a girl like Anne, who had such scant knowledge of the world, and who had seen so much more of the power of money than of its powerlessness; and she dwelt on it with pleasure which hardly left room for regret for its origin. Something she could not define had changed the aspect of life for Anne that day; it was not only David's coming, not only the sight of him with whom her thoughts were always; the change was in *him*, and its influence had passed upon her.

If I were telling a story which I had merely invented, if I were not simply recounting facts which happened to real persons twenty-one years ago, I should hardly venture to describe a young lady as having given her love to a man who had not asked for it, and who did not seemingly return it. But it is only in writing fiction that one is bound by such fictitious laws as that one which enacts that a good, pure, gracious woman shall not love, and know she loves, a man who has not experienced a simultaneous attraction towards her. That she will keep the fact successfully from the perception of other people, if she be endowed with strong nerves, a firm will, and their outcome, self-command, I allow; but that she is blamable, or despicable, or unwomanly, or anything but true to her nature, because, when she has seen the man who realises her ideal, or inspires her with an ideal (which is the more ordinary occurrence of the two), she loves him, though he do not love her, I deny. That an unsought unreturned love is a misfortune, must, I suppose, be granted, and yet it may be made a means for the elevation and purification of the character. It is certainly an element of detachment from lower objects, and it has not the embittering properties of a disappointed love. It is naturally ideal; it rests in the upper realms of imagination and sentiment, and, though capable

of perfect devotion and constancy, is purified of passion by the absence of hope. When women say, as they frequently do, that they cannot entertain the possibility of a woman's loving a man who does not love her, I do not doubt that they are perfectly sincere; the case is out of the range of their perception, but it is none the less existent and blameless. It was Anne Cairnes's case, and it had come about naturally enough. A girl who is the constant companion of an invalid mother, is likely, if she have much mind and heart, to be older than her years. Anne was largely endowed with both, and had a vivid though healthy imagination, which had found scanty aliment in her life, previous to her residence in Scotland. It was not surprising that the frank and kindly young man, who was so good to her dying mother, who came into their house like sunshine, of whom she heard nothing but praises, who was full of enthusiasm for the military career opening before him, a career which Anne regarded with sentiments of admiration, much more common twenty years ago than it is now, should have captivated the fancy, and through it the heart, of the young girl. When David went away, Anne found out her own secret by the utter deadness and flatness of her life, and she acquiesced in it; she was content to love him; could anything be so precious or so blest as that hidden love? So she cherished it, and there was no one to dispute it; no great change in her life, even after her mother's death, to dissipate the deep impression David Mervyn had made upon her. It was not for a long time a question with her of whether he should ever come to care for her; but when that question came, she met it with a negative. Anne had grown older than her mere years when David Mervyn saw her again after her mother's death, and she knew that they met unchanged; she with her whole heart full of him; he with a kindly liking for her, and the gallant admiration of a young man for a lady who is a part of his family circle, without the familiarity of relationship. The unasked love which she had given did not indeed long continue to make Anne happy; with the early days of girlhood that illusion faded out, but it was slow in rendering her positively unhappy; she was singularly humble-minded and dutiful of nature, and would have fought honestly against the monopoly of any one feeling which should render her discontented and ungrateful; but it had some time before Marion's wedding come to this with her, that the constant question of her heart was: 'If I am told that he is going to marry, how shall I bear it?' And she was beset with a doubt whether she ought not to induce her father to leave Scotland. But again she would take herself severely to task for her weakness, and insist with herself that she should be satisfied to be of any account at all in his life, the friend of his wife, as of his sister, perhaps; that, at all events, she would not be cowardly and rebellious, because the one lot she would have chosen beyond all earthly fortunes was not to be hers.

The last term of David Mervyn's absence had been longer than any of the preceding, and harder to Anne to bear. Suitors to the heiress were not wanting, though there was always the chance to be calculated, that Mr Cairnes might marry again, and a half-brother might reduce Anne's value in the matrimonial market. But, as time went on, this

contingency grew more and more improbable; and during the period of Marion Mervyn's engagement, when more liveliness and sociability than usual were astir, Anne found herself obliged to utter a gentle but decisive 'No' more than once to aspirants whom no coquetry of hers had induced to pretend to her hand. Only her father knew anything about these passages in Anne's life, and he did not think much about them. The only daughter of a widower rarely finds her sole parent particularly anxious that she should marry; and Mr Cairnes frankly avowed that he did not care at all about it. Anne and he got on capitally together, and as 'she would have quite enough to keep her comfortably'—this was his unassuming way of alluding to his wealth—he did not see why she should be in a hurry to change her condition. That point happily settled, Anne lived her interior life as truly and undividedly devoted to David Mervyn as if she had been his affianced wife, as firmly assured that no other love could ever find a place in her life as if she had plighted her troth to him at the altar.

The breakfast-table at Barrholme on the morning after the wedding presented an aspect most unusual to that eminently decorous establishment. The meal was served with the profusion and regularity characteristic of Scotch breakfasts, but the partakers dropped in one by one, after a desultory fashion, very trying to the patience of Anne Cairnes, who had taken her place *vice* Lady Mervyn, at her ladyship's desire, with her accustomed punctuality, and found herself for a quarter of an hour the sole occupant of the breakfast-room. David Mervyn came in very late, when several of the guests were preparing to go away, and some time was passed in the desultory conversation common on such occasions. Carriages began to muster; boxes and bags were carried out, and a general move was imminent. At the last moment, Gairloch accomplished the purpose which Lady Mervyn had defeated on the previous evening; he captured David, and complaining loudly that he had hardly had a word with him, proposed they should walk together to the lodges. David had no choice but to assent; and the old laird, holding him by the arm, went up to the top of the table to take leave of Miss Cairnes, with whom David exchanged a glance eloquent of vexation. They then walked off together; but David contrived to remind Anne by another look of her promise, and she remembered that never before had he spoken to her with his eyes!

The last carriage had driven off, Anne's duties were performed, and she was free. She put on her hat and shawl, and left the house by a window of the breakfast-room. As she passed over the turf which divided the house from the sea-wall, she glanced upwards at the windows of Lady Mervyn's room—they were those beneath which the balcony ran—and saw that the blinds were still closely drawn. David would have time to tell her all about his 'difficulty' before he should be summoned by his mother. Then she descended the path from the gate in the sea-wall to the platform among the rocks, and, having seated herself in the place she had occupied the day before, she waited.

The day was dull, the sky was cloudy, the sea was dark and threatening; the serene beauty of yesterday had vanished. The curving shore of the bay was misty and indistinct. After a few minutes,

Anne felt chill, and drew her shawl more closely round her.

She had to wait longer than she expected, but at length she heard the swing of the iron gate above, and steps descending the difficult path with unusual speed. She looked up. Was this David who came towards her?—David, whom she had seen an hour ago, calm, smiling, with no outward sign of his difficulty upon him; this man, whose frame was trembling, whose face was colourless, even to his lips, whose utterance was indistinct through excessive emotion?

Anne started to her feet with an exclamation at sight of him.

'I have had bad news,' he said; 'I must go to London at once! I have not a moment to lose. You will help me, I know.'

'Bad news! How! From whence?'

'Don't ask me. I cannot tell you now, Anne!' (using the name for the first time since his school-boy days). 'You must let me get away without being seen by my mother. You must tell her that I have had to go.'

'What am I to tell her?'

Anne stood before him as pale as himself.

'Tell her—tell her that a brother-officer of mine is in great trouble, and requires my presence and help instantly, and that I could not delay a moment. I shall barely have time to catch the coach now, at the Bridge. My things are ready, and the dog-cart is coming round. This must seem very, very strange to you, Anne, but I will explain it one day.'

'You are greatly distressed! Is there anything?'

He interrupted her. 'No, no; no one can help me—you can only do what I have asked you. God bless you! Good-bye.'

He grasped her hand for a moment, and then turned away. The next, he was out of her sight; and she was left to all the varying emotions of wonder, ignorance, suspense, and dread, with but one point of certainty concerning that which had occurred, that the explanation of his sudden departure which she had undertaken to give Lady Mervyn was totally untrue.

## KINGSLEY ON HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

A SPECTACLE only too common is that of Wisdom crying at the corners of the streets, and no man regarding; but it is to be hoped that Wisdom will not be disgusted, and drop the practice. Somebody, perhaps, will give heed some day. Patience and perseverance are said to surmount all difficulties; and no difficulty is greater than that of persuading a heedless people to not only know themselves and what is good for them, but also put the knowledge into practice. If anybody could hope to persuade them, it should be so earnest, eloquent, persistent, genial a sanitary reformer as Canon Kingsley, who has latterly added to his valuable literary contributions by the publication of certain essays and lectures under the title of *Health and Education*.

And, first of all, as regards health. Different people have propounded different rules for the

guidance of those who would fain get as much happiness as possible out of life. The celebrated Talleyrand recommended the cultivation of 'a hard heart and a good digestion;' and an imaginary Irishman has, in the words of a familiar song, sung the praises of a 'light heart and a thin pair of' inexpressibles. We would borrow a part of each well-known saying, and suggest a combination of the light heart and the good digestion. And the best chance of attaining that combination is to struggle after the acquisition and preservation of a sound mind in a sound body—or, in other words, of the most perfect or the least imperfect health. That is the object set before his hearers and readers by Canon Kingsley, who, in his character of Wisdom ever crying aloud and ever disregarded, necessarily has to repeat the cry that has been uttered—and yet unheeded—a thousand times. For the laws of health are invariable; and the science of health, or, at anyrate, the rudiments of that science, ought to be taught, to use Canon Kingsley's own words, 'in every school, college, and university;' so that young men and young women may from their earliest years know 'something about the tissues of the body, their structure and uses, the circulation of the blood, respiration, chemical changes in the air respired, amount breathed, digestion, nature of food, absorption, secretion,' and so on, and may be taught the causes which produce zymotic disease, scrofula, consumption, rickets, dipsomania, cerebral derangement, and the like.

At the very outset we are confronted by one notable fact: civilisation on the one hand, and war on the other, have interfered with that process of natural selection which issues in the survival of the fittest; for the former, teaching a conscientious care of life, saves alive the fittest to die, and the latter kills off the fittest to live. So that, in laying down our rules of health, we have to seek for conditions other than those that sufficed for the hardy ancestors of whom we sometimes babble; hardy, partly because of the natural endowments which had enabled them to survive their weaker, and, it may be, more numerous brethren; and partly because of the lives they led, and the atmosphere they breathed. Health is, nowadays, required, but alas! seldom pursued, by tens of thousands who 'lead sedentary and unwholesome lives, stooping, asphyxiated, employing as small a fraction of their bodies as of their minds,' and that too in dwellings the influences whereof 'tend not to health but to unhealth, and to drunkenness as a solace under the feeling of unhealth and depression.' What, then, is the first step to be taken by such people? According to Canon Kingsley, it is to encourage in themselves a sentiment of 'divine discontent;' not the discontent which makes men envious of others, and childishly regretful of the good old times 'when our soot-grimed manufacturing districts were green with lonely farms,' but the discontent which makes one dissatisfied with one's self, and with one's physical, intellectual, and moral condition—that is to say, with one's health. Such discontent will not allow us to rest until we have obtained, to the utmost



extent permitted by circumstances, 'pure air, pure water, unadulterated food, sweet and dry dwellings.' All these, it may be urged, and unfortunately with some truth, are beyond the reach of the poor; but, so far as pure air is concerned, some hints are given by Canon Kingsley which may be useful even to the poor, or to employers who care for the poor. He describes what he calls 'the two breaths,' and their effects. The two are, of course, the breath you take in—which 'is, or ought to be, pure air, composed, on the whole, of oxygen and nitrogen, with a minute portion of carbonic acid'—and the breath you give out, which 'is an impure air, to which has been added, among other matters which will not support life, an excess of carbonic acid.' He then points out that this carbonic acid gas, when warm, is lighter than the air, and ascends; and, when at the same temperature as common air, is heavier than that air, and descends, lying along the floor, 'just as it lies often in the bottom of old wells or old brewers' vats, as a stratum of poison, killing occasionally the men who descend into it.' Hence a word of admonition is addressed to those who think nothing of sleeping on the floor; and hence, as 'the poor are too apt, in times of distress, to pawn their bedsteads and keep their beds,' the friends of the poor are entreated never to let that happen, and to 'keep the bedstead, whatever else may go, to save the sleeper from the carbonic acid on the floor.' How to get rid of the warm carbonic acid that rises to the ceiling, is a question which naturally leads to the subject of ventilation. Canon Kingsley takes to task those who hold that too much 'fuss' is made about ventilation, but proceeds to shew that our ancestors did *not* get on very well without it, and that 'when they got on well, it was because they had good ventilation in spite of themselves.' Twenty-five years' experience enables him to say that, for ventilating purposes, he knows 'no simpler method than putting into the chimney one of Arnott's ventilators, which may be bought and fixed for a few shillings; always remembering that it must be fixed into the chimney as near the ceiling as possible.' Another simple method is recommended. It is 'employed in those excellent cottages which Her Majesty has built for her labourers round Windsor. Over each door a sheet of perforated zinc, some eighteen inches square, is fixed, allowing the foul air to escape into the passage; and in the ceiling of the passage a similar sheet of zinc, allowing it to escape into the roof. Fresh air, meanwhile, should be obtained from outside, by piercing the windows, or otherwise.' And a hint is given to builders to let 'bedroom windows open at the top as well as at the bottom.' To take exercise, and to allow free play to the lungs, are, of course, mentioned as necessary for health; and the chief causes of unhealth in children and young ladies are summed up in three words, 'stillness, silence, and stays;' whilst it is roundly stated that, 'if you will look at eminent lawyers and famous orators who have attained a healthy old age, you will see that, in every case, they are men, like the late Lord Palmerston . . . of remarkable size, not merely in the upper, but in the lower part of the chest; men who had, therefore, a peculiar power of using the diaphragm to fill and to clear the lungs, and therefore to oxygenate the blood of the whole body.' Unadulterated food has been

cited as a great promoter of health, when you can get it unadulterated; and even then a knowledge is required of the various kinds, 'according as each tends to make bone, fat, or muscle.' As for pure water, that sustainer of health, that gracious boon turned by mankind into the deadliest of poisons, one's very heart aches to think that 'it is so near and yet so far.' We may stand, as Canon Kingsley, either in the body or in fancy, stood, upon a 'little bridge across a certain brook,' and sigh as we 'look at all that beautiful water which God has sent us hither from the Atlantic;' and the ghosts of many an old Roman millionaire and emperor, 'from Menenius Agrippa and Nero down to Diocletian and Constantine,' will rise up and mock us, and reproach us with the thought that, though we have 'learnt to patch together the nearest Greek and Latin verses,' we, who call ourselves a civilised people, are letting thousands and ten thousands of gallons run to waste under that bridge and elsewhere, forgetful of baths, and aqueducts, and tanks, and of the fact 'which every one should know, that more people, and not strong men only, but women and little children too, are killed and wounded in Great Britain every year by bad water and want of water together, than were killed and wounded in any battle' of modern date. But can we hope with Canon Kingsley that the day will come when the 'poor old water-companies,' which 'swerve and gib at the very mention of constant water-supply, like a poor horse set to draw a load which he feels is too heavy for him,' will be replaced by 'the officers of a corporation or of the government,' by 'water-policemen' in fact, 'who can enter people's houses when they will, and, if they find anything wrong with the water, set it to rights with a high hand, and even summon the people who have set it wrong, a power which, in a free country, must never be given to the servants of any private company?' There may be many and reasonable obstacles to such a hope, but its fulfilment would be an inestimable gain to health amongst us. It would at least increase the chances for us, who 'all live too fast and work too hard,' and amongst whom 'the weak have to compete on equal terms with the strong,' consequently, 'crave for artificial strength,' and help on 'the growing degeneracy of a population striving in vain, by stimulants and narcotics, to fight against those slow poisons with which our greedy barbarism, miscalled civilisation, has surrounded them from the cradle to the grave.' Thus does Wisdom, in the person of Canon Kingsley, cry aloud about health; and his doctrines, he tells his readers, are promulgated in such books as Dr Andrew Combe's *Physiology applied to Health and Education*, and Madame de Wahl's *Practical Hints on the Moral, Mental, and Physical Training of Girls*, as well as in certain tracts published by Messrs Jarrold, Paternoster Row, for the Ladies' Sanitary Association, especially one which bears the title of *The Blackhole in our own Bedrooms*; Dr Lankester's *School Manual of Health*; and a manual on ventilation, published by the Metropolitan Working-classes Association for the Improvement of Public Health.

And now, secondly, as regards education, for which but a small space has been reserved. Here, again, Canon Kingsley, in his character of Wisdom crying aloud, utters doctrine both old and new, which cannot be gainsaid, but, though the



schoolmaster is now abroad in earnest, is not likely to be heeded so much as it deserves. We are certainly mending, but there are still ugly symptoms of a disposition to cram rather than feed the minds of both boys and girls, and to commit the serious mistake of confounding education with a process of intellectual forcing. For what is education? Is it a knowledge of the 'three royal Rs?' No. Is it 'the knowledge which would enable you to take the highest prizes given by the Society of Arts, or any other body?' No. An educated person is one who, though wholly innocent of book-learning, has had all faculties of body, mind, and heart, fully, proportionately, harmoniously educated, brought out, developed so as to form 'at once a reverent yet a self-assured, a graceful and yet a valiant, an able and yet an eloquent personage.' By all means let book-learning, let Latin and Greek, even in the case of girls, be added, if you please; but all that sort of thing is 'only instruction, a necessary ground-work, in an age like this, for making practical use of your education; but not the education itself.' Above all things, let science, before which Ignorance stands aghast, approaching Nature as if she were 'a parrot or a monkey' that may 'bite,' enter into the course of training; and of manifold science let the favourite portion be natural history, to which belongs bio-geology. There should be no need to point out how eminently suited are the various branches of natural history, handy as they are to be studied by soldier, sportsman, traveller, tourist, pedestrian, and even strolling invalid, to produce that combination of sound body and sound mind which is the best of health as well as the best of education. Bio-geology, however, is an 'infant science,' and, on that account, deserves a few special remarks. It is 'the science which treats of the distribution of plants and animals over the globe, and the causes of that distribution;' and as it requires the student to ask all plants or animals met with, not only what are their names, but also where they come from, how they came where they are, whether they are thriving or dying out, and similar questions, it is clear that a sound knowledge of the subject, which is treated of 'in the works of Forbes, Darwin, Wallace, Hooker, Moritz Wagner, and other illustrious men,' would involve something very like a liberal education.

And now, with a few words touching the education of girls and women, let this article be concluded. They are going to be 'developed,' Canon Kingsley says, and made to 'read more books, and do more sums, and pass examinations, and stoop over desks at night after stooping over some other employment all day;' and they are to be taught 'Latin, and even Greek.' So be it, if only by learning Greek they be induced to read and profit by the history of Nausicaa, and copy her—if not to the extent of 'washing the household clothes,' at least so far as learning 'to play at ball; and sing, in the open air and sunshine, not in theatres and concert-rooms by gas-light; and try to look like her, and be like her, of whom Wordsworth sang, the Highland lassie of immortal memory. If the modern notion of assimilating the education of girls to that of boys mean only that they are 'to learn more lessons, and to study what their brothers are taught, in addition to what their mothers were taught,' Canon Kingsley hopes 'that the scheme

will sink into that limbo whither, in a free and tolerably rational country, all imperfect and ill-considered schemes are sure to gravitate.' Otherwise, it must be remembered that girls must have some 'training analogous to our public-school games.' They should be exercised also in that 'pure and noble, useful and cultivated thrift' which renders the 'average German young lady' not a whit the less a lady and an ornament—but very much more, a woman and a prop of the household—than the average young lady of Great Britain. Parents naturally like to see their daughters 'as well dressed as possible,' and at as little cost as possible; and the cares of many a household would be lightened if the daughters, to say nothing of cooking, were to be 'practical milliners and mantua-makers; and, by making their own clothes gracefully and well, exercise thrift in clothing.' Lastly, mothers complain to Canon Kingsley that girls are apt to turn the game of 'Russian Scandal'—in which 'a story, repeated in secret by one player to another, comes out at the end . . . utterly unlike the original'—into 'mischievous earnest;' and, by a habit of exaggeration 'in repeating a conversation or describing an event,' to cause all manner of 'slanders, scandals, and what not.' What is the cure for this evil? 'Some training,' Canon Kingsley says, 'in natural science,' than which nothing is more potent to produce a habit of looking at facts without fancies, and of observing accuracy in detail.

#### THE TWO GERMAN CRUSOES.

In the Atlantic, about midway between the coast of South America and the Cape of Good Hope, in 37° 6' south latitude, lies the island of Tristan da Cunha, with two lesser islands in its neighbourhood. The *Challenger*, H.M. ship, commanded by Captain Nares, now on a scientific expedition, reached Tristan da Cunha late at night, on the 14th October 1873. Next morning, a landing was effected, and the island, which is nineteen or twenty miles in circumference, was found to have a settlement of eighty souls in all. The history of this little colony is curious. In 1816, a company of British artillery was stationed on the island, with a view to keep watch on Napoleon Bonaparte, then in captivity in St Helena. It seems almost ridiculous to have taken this precaution, for St Helena is about thirteen hundred miles distant, and one would think the guard could have been of no avail. Perhaps it was thought, that in the various mad schemes to rescue Napoleon, Tristan da Cunha might have been made a base of operations. When the illustrious captive died in 1821, the British soldiers were withdrawn, leaving only a corporal of the name of Glass, with one or two companions, to take charge of the small fort that had been erected.

From his name, we should suppose that Glass was a Scotchman. At all events, he cleverly adapted himself to his position. The land being fertile, he set to work, cultivating potatoes, cabbages, and other vegetables, bred goats and pigs, and made a business of selling these vegetable and animal products to captains of ships who

in passing stood in need of fresh provisions. Known as Governor Glass, he became a man of note in the South Atlantic. The settlement over which he bore sway thrived apace. In 1820, it amounted to twenty-seven persons—seven men, six women, and fourteen children. They had three hundred acres of land in tillage, and extensive pastures, with seventy head of cattle, a hundred sheep, and innumerable goats, pigs, and poultry—together a thriving concern, though a little solitary. In due course, Governor Glass died, but the settlement continued, and still continues; presenting one of the many examples of the success attending English colonisation, on however small and unassisted a scale. Since the decease of Glass, there has been no recognised chief. The oldest man at present, Peter Green, is at the head of affairs. When ships touch at the island, Peter acts as spokesman and salesman. There is now more stock in trade to work upon than in early times; for the cattle have increased to six hundred, and there is an equal number of sheep. As ships can generally exchange quantities of tea, sugar, flour, and other articles for the produce of the island, a pretty brisk trade in the way of barter is carried on. The islanders also have some commercial negotiations with the Cape of Good Hope, where they find a market for their wool.

It was at this thriving little settlement, as has been said, that the *Challenger* arrived in the course of its cruise. The account of what was seen and learned on the occasion, has been given by Captain Davis in *The Geographical Magazine* (August 1874), and is so interesting, as regards the rescue of two Germans, named Stoltenhoff, from one of the islands of the group, that we feel pleasure in condensing it, for the benefit of our readers.

In 1870, the younger of the two Germans, a sailor, had been wrecked, and with some companions was treated hospitably at Tristan da Cunha. Taken off by a ship, he was brought to Europe; but finding his family ruined by the war, he determined to return, bringing his elder brother with him. The two brothers accordingly carried out their resolution of trying to reach and settle in the small English colony.

'At St Helena,' proceeds the narrative, 'they expended their little stock of money on an outfit suited to their new life, and among other necessities became the owners of an old whale-boat, the best they could get for the money at their disposal, and in November 1871, embarked with all their treasures for Tristan da Cunha, in the American whaler *Java*, Captain Mander. On the passage, the captain, from some unexplainable reason, worked so strongly on the minds of his passengers as to persuade them to land on Inaccessible Island, instead of the one they were bound to. Captain Mander described the island as fertile, and having a valley that led from the beach to the summit, and that on all occasions when he had landed he had seen numbers of wild pigs and goats.

'The brothers were landed on the 27th November 1871; their stores consisted of their whale-boat, some rice, flour, biscuits, sugar, tea and coffee, some salt, a little tobacco and pepper, and a small supply of spirits and wine, some empty barrels for oil, lamp, matches, a rifle, fowling-piece, shot, powder, &c. They also had a few tools, a wheelbarrow, cooking utensils, some seed-potatoes and garden-seeds, a dog and pups, &c. Their library consisted of eight or ten volumes of very miscellaneous reading, with which they got intimately acquainted before they left the island.

'They were landed on the shingle beach on the west side of the island, from which, by a ravine, there was very difficult access to the summit of the cliffs. Four days after they landed, a party of sixteen men, in two boats, arrived from Tristan da Cunha. The *Java* had been becalmed off that island, and the captain had given information of the landing of the two brothers, and as the sealing season had set in, the Tristan da Cunha men set out at once for Inaccessible Island; they behaved with much kindness to the brothers, pointed out that the position they had chosen on the north-west side of the island exposed them to prevailing winds, and advised them to shift their quarters to the north-east side, which they at once agreed to do, and the Tristan da Cunha men took all their stores round, and shewed them how to build a hut, and soon after left them, promising to visit them at Christmas; and the brothers at once set to work building their house near a waterfall, clearing the ground, and planting their seed, and otherwise making preparations for a long stay. Firewood was plentiful, and by aid of the long grass they could reach the summit of the island, where there were about four miles of broken, uneven ground. The beach was about a mile long, with a strip of ground back to the foot of the cliffs.

'Using the boat, they captured nineteen seals. The first house they built failed to keep out the rain, and they had to build another; but while thus working hard at their house and plantation, they were quickly consuming their store of provisions without replenishing it, and they soon became fully aware that the time would arrive when they must be entirely dependent on home produce. They occasionally used their boat in sealing, but unfortunately she was too heavy for two men to handle, and got so damaged that they could only keep her afloat by constantly baling. This was a momentous event to the poor fellows, as, in the beginning of April 1872, the tussock-grass growing on the cliff at the back of their hut, and by means of which they were enabled to get to the summit of the island, accidentally caught fire as they were clearing the ground by burning, and the only way left them of ascending was by going round to the north-west side in their boat: thus by the accident to the boat their means of subsistence was cut off; however, nothing daunted, they cut their whale-boat in two, and built up a stern on the best half, and christened their extraordinary looking craft the *Sea-cart*, and by means of the *Sea-cart* they were enabled to get round the point and to the summit of the island, on which were pigs and goats; they

found the flesh of the latter extremely good, but that of the pigs was unpalatable, owing to their feeding partially on sea-birds.

'On the 14th of May, an English ship hove in sight, and a fire was lighted to attract attention, as their boat was not safe to go outside the kelp in. The captain afterwards reported at Tristan da Cunha, that he had seen two persons on the island, also a square-sterned boat, but that no one came off, and that there appeared to be too much surf for him to attempt a landing.

'The poor fellows' hearts sunk within them as they saw the ship bear away from the island, as winter was setting in on them with heavy gales and much rain; moreover, in one of the gales, their *Sea-cart* was washed off the beach and wrecked, leaving them no means of getting to the accessible side except by swimming round a high bluff: this great loss occurred in June. In May they dug their potatoes, and in the following month some of the other vegetables were fit for food; but being unable to reach the top of the island, the store of provisions ran short, and towards the middle of August the two brothers were greatly reduced in strength. Although fish could be caught in plenty at a little distance from the shore, but few could be taken from the rocks, so that the loss of their boat stopped that means of supply.

'In the middle of August, the male penguins landed to prepare their nests for the season, and at the beginning of September were followed by the females, who began laying; the day before this happened, the brothers had eaten their last potato, and, but for the timely supply of eggs for food, they would have perished.

'In September, a passing French vessel communicated with them, and, in return for some penguins' eggs, they obtained about half a hundred-weight of biscuit, and were disappointed of a further supply of stores by the captain putting to sea. In October (1872), a sealing schooner, named the *Themis*, communicated, and landed six men from Tristan da Cunha. The captain of the *Themis* gave the brothers a small quantity of salt pork, biscuit, and tobacco. On leaving, the captain promised to return in a few weeks' time, but did not do so. At the end of October, the supply of penguins' eggs failed, and on the 10th of November the biscuits and pork were finished, and necessity obliged them to make preparation for swimming round the bluff in search of food. Their powder, matches, and other things requiring to be kept dry, were secured in a cask, which they towed round the bluff. The night was spent at the foot of the cliff, and the following day, with great difficulty, they succeeded in reaching the ridge, and, crossing over to the west side, descended to their first landing-place. A pig was shot, and they enjoyed a hearty meal of fresh meat, the first they had partaken of for many months. In this way they lived until the 10th of December, having shot six goats. A hut was built at this time on the plateau, to shelter themselves when hunting.

'An American whaling schooner visited them, from which they obtained some small supplies, but they would not take that opportunity of leaving the island, expecting the return of the *Themis*. A party of Tristan da Cunha men also landed on the west side, and captured no fewer than forty seals. During the stay of the party, they shot eight of the remaining twelve goats, and, on

leaving, assured the brothers that the *Themis* would most certainly call the next month. Although anxious to leave the island, the brothers were unwilling to go to Tristan da Cunha, feeling that they would not be welcome. For ten months they were without communication with their fellow-men.

'In January 1873, Frederic again swam round the bluff, mounted the cliff, and succeeded in shooting four pigs; these were thrown over the cliff to the brother below: he refrained from shooting the remaining four goats. At the end of the month, Frederic rejoined his brother, and the day after he did so a party from Tristan da Cunha landed on the west side, and either shot or caught the remaining four goats, which they took away with them. They did not communicate with the Germans, and as this was intentional, the brothers considered that their object was to drive them from the island. Probably the Tristan da Cunha people considered that their residing on the island interfered with their hunting-ground; at all events, after their kindness to them on arriving on the island, their conduct was at least inexplicable.

'In February, potatoes and other vegetables, mixed with pigs' fat, formed their daily food; but in March, that food being exhausted, another visit was paid to the plateau, and the goats were then missed, which they had abstained from shooting, but they shot several pigs. At this time, their one great comfort, tobacco, failed, and this to a German is more than we English should feel; they tried to replace it by dried leaves, but without success.

'The dogs which they had brought on shore broke loose, and played sad havoc among the penguins, killing great numbers, and as one was apparently mad, the three were shot. It was now decided that the brothers should separate for a time, the elder to remain on the plateau to provide food, whilst the younger remained below to melt down and store the fat, and attend to the clearing; the want of salt prevented curing the flesh. Three young pigs had been caught and got down the cliffs without injury, then secured to a cask and towed round the point, but were nearly drowned on their passage; they were placed in a sty, and fed with grass and what could be spared from the garden, and also with penguins' eggs, when procurable.

'At the end of April, the elder rejoined the younger, and in the attempt to convey two more pigs round the bluff, was nearly drowned; the pigs were. In June, Frederic again went to the plateau, and remained there until the 18th of August; the brothers were not altogether without communication during that time, for, excepting when the noise of the wind or surf prevented, they could hold a kind of conversation. In June, July, and August, they lived on pigs' flesh only; the penguins then began to lay, and in their eggs they had abundance of food.'

Evidently, this precarious mode of life could not last. The brothers had made a grievous mistake in not following out their original intention of settling in Tristan da Cunha, and subsequently they committed a serious blunder in not taking the earliest opportunity of leaving a spot where they endured a series of extraordinary hardships. At length they had the good fortune to be happily rescued. The captain of the *Challenger*, when

at Tristan da Cunha, having heard that two Germans had landed on Inaccessible Island, twenty miles to the south-west, two years previously, feared they were in difficulties, and went to their succour. The ship arrived at the island on the 16th of October, found the two unfortunate exiles, took them on board, and carrying them off, terminated their wretched Robinson Crusoe-like existence.

W. C.

### DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

How to find these, appears to be a growing difficulty. From the changes taking place in our social system, young women who were disposed to hire themselves as 'helps,' are gradually becoming more scarce. One is glad to know that there is such an improvement in the general condition of affairs, that many are above taking wages to assist in household work; but the question obviously arises, 'What is to be done?' The answer, given in a very straight-forward manner by *The Queen*, a singularly well-conducted 'Lady's newspaper,' is, that the young females in many families should begin to make themselves useful in household work, instead of standing idly aloof on their gentility. As far as we can see, it has in some quarters come to this. To quote from this clever newspaper: 'We hear day by day of the difficulty of finding employment for middle-class women on one hand, and on the other of the difficulty of obtaining adequate domestic help. Let the women of middle-class households return to the habits of the days of their grandmothers and great-grandmothers, and the difficulty would in a measure cease. Formerly, the spinning and weaving, the baking and brewing, the pickling and preserving needed for the household took up the time of the women-folk entirely. The girls were not incumbrances then, but useful members, who did much work in their mothers' houses before they migrated to their own. Now the need for these household services is much less, and even what remains is made over to hired hands, while the daughters of the household pass dreary days in tatting or hair-dressing, in gossip or novel-reading, in aimless walks or objectless "practising." It would be a far better and more healthy condition of things if the daughters put aside all false notions as to the "ungentility" of household work—if they made beds, and cleaned and dusted, and cooked and washed—in a word, performed themselves all the necessary work of the household. Use makes all things easy, and household work done by willing and deft fingers is not so tiring a thing by a long way as the work of a teacher, or of a shop-girl, or of a seamstress. At present there appears to be an idea that the doing of household work involves something that is degrading—and gentility is the thing to be aimed at, loss of caste the thing to be feared. The rush of incompetent women to be governesses is simply absurd. Which is better off, a daily governess, who is expected to teach and keep in order a class of children from ten in the morning till six in the evening, and who receives for this a salary of £30 a year; or a housemaid, whose wages are £20, with "everything found," and no special appearance to keep up? Which is really best off, the nursery

governess or the nursery-maid? the ordinary governess or the cook? There are many women who ought to work, and who must work, but who have neither the education nor the capacity to be governesses or nurses of any value. We believe that few women undertake the last-named office without some special vocation for it; but we know that there are many—we may say hundreds—of governesses who dislike their work, and who do it inefficiently, because they neither know how to set about it, nor do they care how it is done. It would be a happy day for many women if they could free themselves from the shackles of gentility which compel them to become and remain inferior governesses, and could undertake house-work, which they would do with satisfaction to themselves and others. We can conceive nothing so utterly wearisome as the life of a teacher or governess whose heart is not in her work; and, in comparison with such, the life of the most thorough household drudge is honourable and useful.' Apropos to observations of this character, Miss Emily Faithful, in *Women and Work*, says, in reference to the ingenious and hand-soiling labours of Watt, Stephenson, and Faraday: 'So, too, no woman who lets herself be deterred by that word menial, need ever hope to make for herself a place amongst the workers in the world. But it will be said: "Whatever the original meaning of the word may have been, it has now become synonymous with much that is undignified. We do not care what its derivation is, if derivation no longer accords with the meaning it conveys." To this there is but one answer—no work can be dignified which is useless. We have seen little pincushions, fairy-like in their tiny neatness, and could not but admire the deftness of the fingers that had made them, while we sighed at the rubbishy character of the product, useless to the producer and to everybody else. Truly the housemaid of the lady who made them had the more dignified occupation of the two, for the housemaid's work was essential to the comfort of the household; her mistress's to no one. And yet those ladies who shrink from "menial" work would choose the futile pincushions in preference; and, seeking dignity, miss all chance thereof.' Very plain speaking all this! The matter is worth thinking about.

### RECOVERED.

FORTH issuing from my long-kept cottage door,

Released from recent agonising pain,

How throbs my heart to tread these tracks once more,

And breathe the untainted air of heaven again!

I mind me how the die was all but cast,

How like the unseen weapon was to fall,

And the sad weeks of sickness overpast

Be crowned with death, the issue of it all.

And as I think of this, I feel a growth

Of gratitude my heart and bosom swell,

A sweet enlargement of the breast, that shew'th

More than the tongue may speak or words could tell;

The which God takes as a thank-offering,

From one who knows the notes, but cannot sing.

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